11/09/23 • COVID › NEWS

More Than 80 Lawsuits in UK Allege AstraZeneca COVID Vaccine Caused Deaths, Severe Injuries

Two lawsuits working their way through the U.K. court system could determine the fate of a class-action suit filed against AstraZeneca by more than 80 people who allege they or a family member were injured by the drugmaker's COVID-19 vaccine.

By Michael Nevradakis, Ph.D.

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Two lawsuits working their way through the U.K. court system could determine the fate of a class-action suit filed against AstraZeneca by more than 80 people who allege they or a family member were injured by the drugmaker's COVID-19 vaccine.

The two lawsuits are being heard as test cases for the larger class-action lawsuit.

One of the test cases was filed in the U.K.'s High Court by Jamie Scott, a father of two who sustained a permanent brain injury as a result of blood clots caused by the vaccine in April 2021.

The Telegraph, reporting Wednesday on the Scott case, noted that the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine was "branded 'defective'" and that case "will suggest claims over its efficacy were 'vastly overstated.'"

The second test case was filed by the widower of 35-year-old Alpa Tailor, who died after receiving the AstraZeneca vaccine.

These "are the first lawsuits brought in England and Wales over an adverse reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine, according to publicly-available court records," Reuters reported.

According to The Telegraph, "The test cases could pave the way for as many as 80 damages claims worth an estimated £80 million [$98.3 million] over a new condition known as vaccine-induced Immune Thrombocytopenia and Thrombosis (VITT) that was identified by specialists in the wake of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine rollout."

Alex Mitchell welcomed the news that the lawsuits are proceeding. He received his first and only dose of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine on March 20, 2021. He collapsed at home just weeks later, on April 4. Today, he is an amputee and suffers from VITT.

"As one of the participants in one of the U.K. class actions, I can say that it's been nearly three years of waiting for a day like this to finally begin," he told The Defender.

"I was initially given no hope of survival when I collapsed on the 4th of April 2021 and spending seven and a half hours in a surgery I wasn't expected to survive," Mitchell told The Defender. "I then spent a week in isolation before I was amputated from above the knee on the 11th of April 2021. I have brain damage and sight issues among other symptoms from VITT."

The 80 claimants banded together to form the VITT Litigation Group and have launched a crowdfunding campaign, stating that "AstraZeneca cannot continue to ignore the circumstances in which their vaccine has caused devastating injury and loss. Our legal case will seek to hold AstraZeneca to account."

"The claimants are pursuing a two-pronged strategy: taking legal action against the Consumer Protection Act 1987 as well as claiming payment under the government-run Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme," which is limited to payouts of £120,000 ($147,000) per claim, The Telegraph reported.

"Payment under the scheme does not preclude a claim for personal injury through the courts. Those taking action under the Consumer Protection Act must show that the vaccine was not as safe as the public were entitled to expect."

"Life with VITT is one of not knowing what's going to happen to me, as they can only keep my blood stable at present and are so far unable to reverse the PF4 [anti-platelet factor 4] antibody," Mitchell, now 59 years old, said.

"My day-to-day is trying to heal what can be healed and deal with how I feel. Mental health is a big issue and unfortunately now having PTSD doesn't help," he added.

The Telegraph cited figures from the U.K.'s Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency showing at least 81 U.K. deaths "are suspected to have been linked to the adverse reaction that caused clotting in people who also had low blood platelets." Almost 1 in 5 people who suffered from the condition died as a result, according to the same data.

As of March 6, the U.K.'s Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme received 4,017 COVID-19 vaccine injury claims, of which 622 were related to the AstraZeneca vaccine, according to data cited by The BMJ.

Dr. Joel Wallskog is a Wisconsin orthopedic surgeon who no longer practices as a result of injuries he sustained from the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. Today, he is co-chairman of REACT19, a nonprofit advocacy group representing vaccine injury victims.

Wallskog told The Defender he welcomed the AstraZeneca lawsuits:

> "I empathize with the plaintiffs that were severely and permanently injured from their COVID-19 shots. I am cautiously optimistic that such litigation for some countries will result in greater societal awareness of the shot injuries and pressure on their elected officials to provide fair and just compensation."

REACT19's other co-founder, Brianne Dressen, who was injured by the AstraZeneca vaccine she received during a clinical trial, said, "These cases are an important step to shine a light on the severe human impact of the mismanagement of vaccine harms."

Dressen is now part of two lawsuits connected to her vaccine injuries, both of which she said are "sitting in federal court." The legal developments in the U.K. "unfortunately don't impact my lawsuits, but I'm very encouraged to see my fellow AstraZeneca injured colleagues seek justice," she said, adding:

> "We shouldn't have to sue. If the system worked as it should, we would be taken care of and wouldn't be forced to seek justice through the courts. U.S. protections are the gold standard for the pharmaceutical companies — some of the worst globally for consumer protections due to the PREP [Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness] Act."

Pierre Kory, M.D., MPA, president and chief medical officer of the Front Line COVID-19 Critical Care Alliance, shared a more optimistic view, telling The Defender, "This case could be the first of many that might impact the U.S. Justice is moving slowly but seems to be moving in the right direction."

Kory also expressed his "hope this case's outcome signals a change for the millions of people suffering after COVID-19 vaccination. There is no replacement for your health, but I expect that this case creates a precedent that will allow the vaccine-injured to receive some justice for their suffering."

Charlene Bollinger, founder and CEO of The Truth About Vaccines and The Truth About Cancer, also welcomed the news.

"The dam of lies is finally breaking, and justice is finally going to be served to those who committed these crimes against humanity," Bollinger said. "But sadly, so many innocent people have had to pay the price with their life before the truth reached the high courts."

Cardiologist Dr. Peter McCullough, has been outspoken in his criticism of the COVID-19 vaccines. He told The Defender:

> "The AstraZeneca/Oxford and Janssen [Johnson & Johnson] vaccines are manufactured by the same biodefense contractor, Emergent Biosolutions. These are both adenoviral DNA vaccines that deliver the gene that codes for the potentially lethal SARS-CoV-2 spike protein into the human body.
>
> "There are no controls over quantity and duration of the spike protein. The side effect profile, including nonfatal and fatal serious adverse events, are similar for the adenoviral DNA and mRNA COVID-19 vaccines."

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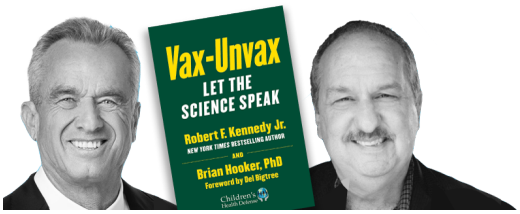

'Permanent and debilitating' brain injury after getting AstraZeneca vaccine

Jamie Scott filed a product liability lawsuit against AstraZeneca on Aug. 21, after being diagnosed with VITT, Reuters reported in August.

According to The Telegraph, Scott, who was 44 years old at the time, "almost died after receiving the vaccine." He "suffered a catastrophic bleed on the brain and doctors called his wife, Kate, three times to tell her to come to the hospital to say goodbye to him."

According to the VITT Litigation Group, "Prior to his vaccination, Jamie was a hands-on father of two young boys, a wonderful husband to his wife Kate, and a high-functioning IT specialist earning a good wage for his family."

"Within days of receiving his AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccination, he suffered multiple blood clots resulting in permanent and debilitating brain injury," confirmed to have been "caused by the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine," the group added.

The Telegraph reported that Scott's lawyers argued he sustained "personal injuries and consequential losses" as a result of the VITT. His legal claim alleges the vaccine was "defective" and argues that the vaccine's product information did not include any warning regarding the risk of VITT.

Scott's wife, Kate Scott, told The Telegraph, "We cannot stand the injustice of it. We have been lobbying the government for 18 months for fair compensation for the injury caused by the vaccine."

"We were told by the government the vaccine was safe and effective but what's happened to Jamie has been life-changing and their [AstraZeneca] vaccine caused that," she added.

In a statement shared by the VITT Litigation Group, Kate Scott said, "Due to the inadequacy of the Government's Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme and AstraZeneca's unwillingness to even talk to us, let alone to resolve these claims without a fight, our group has no choice but to seek compensation through the Courts," she said.

"Those suffering VITT injuries or bereavement have not been acknowledged nor offered adequate compensation by AstraZeneca, nor by the UK Government that encouraged all of us to step up for vaccination," she added.

"It is understood AstraZeneca, in its legal response, denies causing Mr Scott's injuries," The Telegraph reported.

Such denials do not come as a surprise for Mitchell, who told The Defender that "Given AstraZeneca's behavior as a company so far, and their own past as one of the most fined companies in history, I expect nothing less from them."

AstraZeneca vaccine allegedly used 'risky' technology

The second test case before the U.K. High Court concerns the death of Alpa Tailor, who died in April 2021, less than a month after receiving the AstraZeneca vaccine. According to The Telegraph, "An inquest in September 2021 determined she died from blood clots and bleeding on the brain" caused by VITT.

Her husband, Anish Tailor, filed the lawsuit on Aug. 4, Reuters reported. Also filed as a product liability claim under the Consumer Protection Act, the lawsuit seeks damages of up to £5 million ($6.14 million), according to The Telegraph.

On its website, the VITT Litigation Group highlights the stories of several other claimants who are part of the pending class-action lawsuit against AstraZeneca.

Lisa Shaw was a BBC radio journalist, wife and mother. She received the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine in April 2021 and "Shortly afterwards, she died because of blood clots that developed in her brain." Her death certificate confirmed that her death was the result of complications stemming from her vaccination.

Her husband, Gareth Eve, told the VITT Litigation Group:

> "My son Zach (aged 8) and I live with the loss of Lisa every single day. Our house is a quiet place now. Days don't have the same glow. Grief casts a long shadow over everything. The gap left in our lives is immense. Losing a spouse turns life upside down. Everything changes. It wasn't supposed to be like this."

Jane Wrigley was diagnosed with cerebral venous sinus thrombosis on March 30, 2021, "and underwent emergency surgery to evacuate multiple blood clots." Clinicians attributed these blood clots to "VITT caused by the AstraZeneca vaccine."

"Jane was a very active and supportive grandma. She enjoyed running and outdoor activities, which are sadly now very limited," the VITT Litigation Group wrote, adding that now, "Jane can no longer care for herself and has extremely limited mobility."

Ben Hollobone was 37 years old and in good health when he received his AstraZeneca vaccine — but 17 days later, he "died alone in hospital." Hollobone's death certificate confirmed that his cause of death was VITT.

Daniel Harris, a father of a 2-year-old boy, died at the age of 32, even though he previously was "a fit and well young man." According to an inquest, the VITT Litigation Group wrote, "his cause of death was a Right Cerebral Haemorrhage Stroke and Vaccine-Associated Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia, an adverse reaction to the COVID-19 vaccine."

At 32 years of age, Dr. Stephen Wright was a senior clinical psychologist at the U.K.'s Great Ormond Street Hospital, and operated his own private practice. According to the BBC, Wright, who was the father of two young sons, died in January 2021, 10 days after he received the AstraZeneca vaccine.

His wife, Charlotte Wright, told the VITT Litigation Group, "Stephen's loss has had a devastating impact on us as a whole family; emotionally and financially. My sons will have to grow up without their father from a very young age which has had a profound effect on their lives and development and the long-term effect is unfathomable."

"We continue to suffer emotional trauma fighting to be heard and for the vaccine injured and bereaved families to finally get justice," she added.

Neil Miller, a father of two, died on May 1, 2021, at the age of 50, due to complications of the AstraZeneca vaccine. In May, his wife, Kam Miller, told the Daily Mail that she received zero compensation or support from the U.K. government, leaving her struggling with her mental health and forcing her to sell her family's home.

Peter Todd, a lawyer with Scott-Moncrieff & Associates, a law firm handling claims from AstraZeneca vaccine victims, told The BMJ that his clients' complications "included stroke, heart failure, and leg amputations." He also described the technology utilized by the AstraZeneca vaccine as "risky."

Sarah Moore, a partner at Hausfeld, another law firm representing many of the victims and their families, wrote in The Telegraph: "It is plainly factually inaccurate to claim that vaccines do no harm given the experience of our client group."

"By beginning a legal battle against AstraZeneca, the vaccine injured and bereaved will use the law to seek accountability and compensation for the deaths of their loved ones and the life-changing injuries that many in the group have sustained," Moore added.

Moore previously told The BMJ that the £120,000 payment offered to vaccine injury victims in the U.K. was "nothing," as "Many were parents and many were caregivers."

The Telegraph cited official U.K. government figures obtained via a Freedom of Information request, showing that the Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme has made 148 payouts — from which "at least 144 went to recipients of the AstraZeneca vaccine."

Mitchell said he is "the first living person to be awarded the U.K.'s Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme." He described the experience of navigating this program as "horrific and inhumane" and said it "needs a full reform that would negate ordinary people from having to litigate."

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Was the UK government aware of AstraZeneca vaccine risks?

According to The Telegraph, the lawsuits "will raise questions about what the U.K. authorities knew about concerns over the vaccine and how they were handled."

The Telegraph cited a statement by Sir John Bell, regius professor of medicine at Oxford University and former adviser to the U.K.'s Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation, who said, "It is an asteroid-like risk from the AstraZeneca vaccine. There is a risk of getting hit by an asteroid but it isn't very big."

The Telegraph also cited revelations from the "Lockdown Files," now being examined by the U.K.'s Covid-19 Inquiry, indicating that the U.K. government was aware of problems with the AstraZeneca vaccine just "a few weeks into the vaccine's rollout."

One document revealed that Bell told a health official AstraZeneca "misjudged some things like clinical trials data and manufacturing."

Yet, in January 2021, then-U.K. Health Secretary Matt Hancock told the U.K. Parliament about the AstraZeneca vaccine, "I would like to stress that the data so far on this vaccine suggests that there will be no adverse reactions, and so no liability" — a claim now referenced by lawyers representing the plaintiffs in the cases against AstraZeneca.

Hancock sought an indemnity for AstraZeneca, according to The Telegraph, in the "very unexpected event of any adverse reactions that could not have been foreseen through the robust checks and procedures that have been put in place."

The BMJ says this legal protection is in place, writing that "Even though the legal claim is against AstraZeneca, the UK taxpayer will have to pay any compensation awarded, under a legal indemnity that the government gave the company early in the pandemic."

Behind every statistic, 'there is a family or human being going through hell'

In late 2020, Boris Johnson, then-U.K. prime minister, called the vaccine a "triumph for British science." However, according to The Telegraph, "In the months following the rollout, the serious side effect of the AstraZeneca jab was identified by scientists."

Yet, The Telegraph also reported that "Independent studies show the AstraZeneca vaccine was incredibly effective in tackling the pandemic, saving more than six million lives globally in the first year of the rollout."

However, according to The BMJ, in 2021, the U.K.'s Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency found a possible link between the vaccine and VITT.

In April 2021, the U.K. stopped administering the vaccine to those under 30, and the following month, stopped its administration to those under 40, The Telegraph reported.

In March 2021, Germany stopped administering the AstraZeneca vaccine to those under 60 over the risk of "rare blood clots," while the following month, Denmark withdrew the vaccine entirely due to the blood clot link.

Also in March 2021, the U.S. Data and Safety Monitoring Board suggested that AstraZeneca may have provided "outdated information" to U.S. authorities, which provided "an incomplete view" of the results of its clinical trials.

Despite these known dangers, the World Health Organization (WHO) said in December 2021 the AstraZeneca vaccine was "excellent," adding that "there is no indication to not use it." The WHO reiterated these claims in June 2022, saying the AstraZeneca vaccine is "safe and effective for all individuals aged 18 and above."

Yet, in July 2022, the U.K.'s Prescription Medicines Code of Practice Authority ruled that AstraZeneca had violated its code in repeatedly referring to the COVID-19 vaccine as "safe" in a December 2020 press release and that its claims "were based on relative risk reduction … and not absolute risk reduction … which was a vastly smaller number."

The AstraZeneca vaccine was never publicly offered in the U.S., and today, it is no longer administered in the U.K.

In response to the ongoing litigation, AstraZeneca told The Telegraph in a statement "Patient safety is our highest priority and regulatory authorities have clear and stringent standards to ensure the safe use of all medicines, including vaccines. Our sympathy goes out to anyone who has lost loved ones or reported health problems."

"From the body of evidence in clinical trials and real-world data, Vaxzevria [the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine] has continuously been shown to have an acceptable safety profile and regulators around the world consistently state that the benefits of vaccination outweigh the risks of extremely rare potential side effects," the company added.

Wallskog told The Defender that "The incidence of adverse events is unknown, because of the lack of study and transparency regarding adverse events," while Dressen said "AstraZeneca should be pulled from the global markets. Even in clinical trials, it had a rate of serious adverse events at 2.5 times higher than all of the other vaccines."

Mitchell, who appeared in the documentary "Safe and Effective: A Second Opinion," said he "set out two and a half years ago to raise awareness of VITT and the lack of any help and support," adding, "Behind every statistic and piece of data you read, please remember that there is a family or a human being going through hell."

SUGGEST A CORRECTION

Michael Nevradakis, Ph.D.
Michael Nevradakis, Ph.D., based in Athens, Greece, is a senior reporter for The Defender and part of the rotation of hosts for CHD.TV's "Good Morning CHD."

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F

Frederick Lee

7 days ago

Condolences to the victims and their families that made this article possible.
Now, the question is, did (or do) these victims, the ones that suffered from the equivalent of "the likelihood of getting hit by an asteroid" or meteor(ite) or whatever was meant, need to roll up their sleeve for a jab for another mRNA injection also endorsed (and, I believe mandated?) by the likes of Dr. Borris Johnson? (I presume he is a Doctor, based on his comments.) A J&J or pfizer or moderna jab that also is, was, and always will be, safe and effective, but still much much better than the equally, at the time, safe and effective AZ version????

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Belinda

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G. FORTIN

5 days ago

Safe and effective, safe and effective, safe and effective! Doesn't that resemble the mantra of a soldier under torture (my name is---- my number is ----) to fight giving secrets away? Can you imagine the effect their telling the truth at last would have? They would be hounded and who wants to face that? So "safe and effective" it has to be.

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trmlogan